"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—CHRIST.

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MY RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

BY A PRESBYTERIAN MINISTER'S DAUGHTER.

MY *intellectual* character was a singular compound of the practical and imaginative. In youth I had no love for study or for reading even, excepting works of imagination. Don Quixote, the novel to which I first had access, was nearly committed to memory, as were a few novels found at my grandmother's. The poets, both ancient and modern, were always in reach, and with these materials I early formed a habit of reverie and castle-building as my chief internal source of enjoyment.

Socially, I was good-natured and sympathizing, so that my jokes and tricks were never such as to tease or annoy others.

Morally, I had a strong sense of justice, but was not naturally so conscientious as some of the other children. Add to these, persevering energy, great self-reliance, and such cheerful hopefulness that the idea of danger or failure never entered my head. Even to this day, perfect success and no mischances are always anticipated till reason corrects the calculation.

Thus constituted, my strict religious training made little impression, for I rarely heard any thing of that which seemed so dull and unintelligible. Up to the age of sixteen my conceptions on this subject were about these: that God made me and all things, and was very great and wise, and good; that he knew all I thought and did; that because Adam and Eve disobeyed him *once* only, he drove them out of Eden, and then so arranged it that all their descendants would be born with wicked hearts, and that, though this did not seem either just or good, it was so; that I had such a wicked heart that I could not feel or act right in any thing till I had a new one; that God only could give me a new heart; that, if I died without it, I should go to a lake of fire and brimstone, and be burned alive in it forever; that Jesus Christ was very good, and very sorry for us, and came to earth, and suffered and died to save us from this dreadful doom.

In the earlier periods of my religious training, my parents in their instructions, and also my little hymns and catechisms, made the impression that God loved little children, and, though he was angry when they did wrong, he was pleased when they did right; and, as parental government was tender and loving, my impression of the feelings of the heavenly Parent were conformed to this, my past experience.

But when, in more mature years, I came under the influence of "revival preaching," all this impression seemed to be reversed. I was taught to look at God as a great "moral governor," whose chief interest was "to sustain his law." Then there seemed to be two kinds of right and wrong, the "common" and the "evangelical." According to this distinction, I could not feel or do any thing that was right or acceptable *to God* till my birth-gift of a depraved heart was renewed by a special divine interposition.

Meantime, there did not seem to be any direct and practical way of securing this supernatural interference; for it was to be the result, not of any efforts of mine, nor were any divine promises or encouragements offered to secure my efforts. On the contrary, the selection of the recipients of this favour was regulated by a divine decree of "election," without reference to any acts of a being who did nothing but evil, and only evil, till this favour was bestowed. Moreover, all the exhortations to effort were based simply on the fact that, ordinarily, those who did the most were passed by.

It was this view of the case that had the chief influence in leading to an entire neglect of all religious concerns. It was so nearly like a matter of mere chance, and there seemed so little adaptation of means to ends, that to one so hopeful, and, at the same time, so practical, there was very little motive of any kind to lead to a religious life.

The first real earnest feeling I ever had on this subject was when my tender mother died—such a mother as earth had seldom seen; as strong in intellect as she was modest and gentle in manners, and loving and sympathizing in heart. She left seven children younger than myself, one of them a babe, and I only sixteen. I really tried for some time to become a Christian, till the load of grief was alleviated by time, and then such efforts ceased; but these new responsibilities turned my practical habits into useful channels.

Once after this, when "a revival" seemed closing, and my father expressed his distress for my indifference, I told him I was so happy I could do nothing but enjoy life, and that *nothing but trials and sorrow* would do me any good. Tears came into his eyes as he said, "Dear child, must I die too?" The responsive tears came to my eyes, but soon all was forgotten.

At this time my theory of morals was, that to lie, steal, swear, quarrel, disobey parents, and break the Sabbath, were sins for which I should feel guilty; but for not becoming a Christian, when I could not understand how to do it, never rested on my conscience as a sin, but was felt to be simply a misfortune. And I wondered, if God desired that I should have a new heart, and he only could give it, why he did not do so. This was the amount of my "reasoning" so far. Till nearly twenty, I gained little knowledge except by intercourse with intelligent people, for still I had no love for solid reading or study. At about that age, I remember turning over Reid's work on Mental Science, in which my mother had been deeply interested, and wondering how people could read such stuff.

At twenty that betrothal took place, so soon and so tragically ended! It was the realization of all my favourite dreams of earthly bliss. Affection, taste, ambition, every thing most desirable to family friends, seemed secured. In a few months all was ended, and in the most terrible and heartrending manner.

After the first stunning effect was over, the next feeling was, "This is that indispensable sorrow! this is to save me from *eternal death!*" And so, as soon as I could do anything, I began a course of religious reading, prayer, and mental conflict. I tried to remedy that pernicious mental habit of reverie and castle-building; I tried to do I knew not what in "becoming a Christian."

Shut up in entire seclusion, all my dearest hopes forever crushed, without hope or object in life, overwhelmed with grief, horrified less at his dreadful death than at the awful apprehensions he himself had imparted that he was unprepared to die, I spent week after week in reading the stern and powerful writings of President Edwards, Dwight's System of Theology, and other similar works. I hoped for nothing, cared for nothing but to become a Christian. Yet no one could tell me intelligibly how to do it, while it was clear that all expected nothing from my efforts, and that all was dependent on a divine efflatus that was to change the birth-gift of a depraved heart.

And yet I was told that the fault was all my own; that it was my obstinate *unwillingness* to do what was required that alone made it needful for God to interfere. This was urged as a doctrine from God, and so, though it seemed as if I was not only willing, but that I longed for this change, I submitted my humble intellect to His, and owned that it must be so. So passed several dark and weary months.

Next, I went to visit the parents of the friend I had lost. Here I read his private records of *years* of almost superhuman effort to govern his mind, and to achieve the very thing I was labouring for, and yet, to his mind, all ended in entire failure; and this, too, without any murmuring, or any accusation of any one but himself. It was, as he maintained, because he was so ungrateful, so hardened, so obstinately "unwilling" so averse from God and his service. And yet he was the model of every domestic, social, and official virtue; so reverent to God, so tender as a son and brother, so conscientious and faithful as an instructor! In not a single duty did he fail that the closest intimacy could discover;

and yet, by his own showing, he had no love to God, and was entirely "unwilling" to love and serve him.

At the same time, I found his intelligent, tender, heart-broken mother had for years been living just such a conscientious life, without any hope that she was a Christian, while now her pride and darling son was lost to her forever on earth, and oh! where was he? and where should she meet him at last? And thus she died. The only brother, too, so conscientious and exemplary, was and long continued in the same position of mind.

These revelations took away all hope of any good from any farther efforts of mine. At this period I almost lost my reason. For some days I thought I should go distracted. The first decided "Change of mind" I now recall was an outburst of indignation and abhorrence. I remember once rising, as I was about to offer my usual, now hopeless prayer, with a feeling very like this: that such a God did not deserve to be loved; that I would not love him if I could, and I was glad I did not! It was but momentary, and the long training of years resumed its sway.

At one time my mind turned with longing and tender emotions toward Jesus Christ. All he said and did appeared so reasonable and so kind that it seemed to me he would hear my prayers. I brought, to sustain this idea, the case of the young man whom "Jesus loved" when he had no religion. Here I was met by a theory that, till now, had not attracted my notice, which was, that there was a human soul in Christ joined to the Divine mind, and that it was this human soul that felt this "human sympathy" for sinners, and *bore all the suffering*, while the Deity had nothing but calm, unmingled bliss. This made me feel that I could love the human soul, but could not love God. Indeed, the sufferings of this innocent Saviour, *unshared by* God, was the most revolting of all.

Finally, I came to this attitude of mind: "I will not try any more to understand any thing about these doctrines. I will not try any more to 'be convinced of sin' in this inability to love God. Something is the matter; it does not seem like obstinate 'unwillingness;' but if God says so, I will take his word for it. I will assume that He is just, and wise, and good, in spite of all that seems to the contrary. I will try to do all He commands the best I can. *There must be a dreadful mistake somewhere*, but I will trust and obey, and wait quietly for light." At this time my father gave me some little hope. I knew not why, for I did not "love God" according to any of the ordinary tests. But I was encouraged to hope that my heart was "renewed," and I shortly after made a public profession of religion in my father's church.

I went on for several years with no other evidence of "love to God," which was the main test of "regeneration," but perseverance in the determination to assume that He was wise, just, and good, and to do all I could to obey him. My great aim in life was to find out what He required, from the Bible, and then to try and do it as well as I could. Besides this, I imitated the methods of Christian worthies. I kept a religious diary—read religious books—went to religious meetings—prayed in my school, and taught religion to my pupils as it had been taught to me. Often, when I found suffering young minds embarrassed by my own difficulties, willing and anxious to do all in their power, and yet unable to feel as required, I almost lived over past anguish of spirit, and could scarcely nerve myself to instruct them all the wrong was their own "obstinate unwillingness." There was a constant conflict between the theories to which I had bowed my intellect, and I thought I really believed, and the impulses of my moral nature and common sense.

Sometimes these questions were intolerably imperative. What evidence is there that what God says is *true*, when He claims to be wise, and just, and good, when He has done such contradictory things? For a single act, done six thousand years ago, the *first* act of disobedience too, He has so constituted things that all the human minds that might be made right are formed so "*depraved*" as that not one of them will ever be "willing" to love and obey the Creater till He "*renews*" their minds. If I were to act thus, I should think it right for every one to believe I was cruel and unjust until I showed good reasons for it. And if I saw any one ruining the minds of young children, or permitting Adam or any one else to do it, when I had power to prevent it, I should say it was right to consider him an abominable and hateful being till he showed good reasons for such a course.

Such thoughts were banished by the force of a strong will, and I continued to hold on to the Bible as a revelation from God, and to His claims as being wise, and just, and good. My renewed decision was, "There is some *dreadful mistake somewhere;* but I will take God's word and trust it, do the best I can, and wait till all is made clear."

In the later periods of life, a mode of religious training has come repeatedly under my observation, to which a brief reference will here be made. I have known children, no more favourably endowed than myself, and some of them less so, whose parents were no more earnest and faithful than mine, though on a different theory.

These children were first trained to prompt, unquestioning, and universal obedience to their parents' commands, almost such as is required by their Creator to his fixed and unalterable laws. At the same time they were treated with the greatest tenderness and sympathy, and as soon as they could understand the reasons for parental requirements, these reasons were given, but always with the understanding that implicit obedience must often be rendered without understanding the reasons. When these habits of confiding and affectionate obedience were formed. then they were taught that God was the Maker, Friend, and Father of all, who loved all his children as these parents loved their little ones, only more and better; that He created them to be happy, rejoiced to see them so, and was always sorry for them in every trouble.

They were taught that there were *right* ways and *wrong* ways in seeking to be happy; that Jesus Christ came into this world to teach us what are these right and wrong ways, and that His instructions are written in the Bible; that it is very difficult to feel and act right in all things; that, when children *try* to do so, the Saviour is pleased with them, and, though they see him not, is present with them to help them; that, when they fail, and feel and act wrong, he is grieved, as their parents are, and as ready to forgive and help them, when they too are sorry, and continue to try to do right in all things; that *they are Christians just so far as they succeed in obeying Christ*, and that the more they try, the more help they will have, and the better they will succeed.

Thus these children grew up with the feeling that whenever they did any thing that was kind, honest, honourable, just, and self-denying, they were pleasing, not only to their parents, but to their best and ever-present Friend. Under such a course, the varied duties of religion and of social and domestic life were gradually not only explained, but *enforced*, both by parental authority and example, till a character and habits were formed that were far more consistent with the New Testament exhibitions of Christian life than is often seen among mature Christians.

I now wish to exhibit the influence of one doctrine (which I claim to be that of reason as truly as of revelation) [We are firmly persuaded it is neither scriptural nor rational] on a mind like mine. I have stated something of that hopeful, elastic, and happy temperament that seemed to make sorrow so indispensable to the developement of my noblest powers. But the earthly sorrow, time and new interests would have remedied ere youth had passed. But that awful doctrine of THE ETERNAL, IRREMEDIABLE LOSS OF THE SOUL, so ground into my spirit by years of effort, of which this was the mainspring, has been the grand motive power of my whole life ever since. If I could in any way have satisfied myself that a time would come, however distant, when all sufferers would be repaid by eternal ages of bliss, and the guilty, however long their period of purgation, would at last be pure and happy *forever*, I should have returned to life and its enjoyments with fresh zest after such a period of privation.

Many times, when, by the presentation of such an awful theme, I have brought the young to me with tears and willing docility, and when, to the question "What can we do to be saved?" my shut-up heart was ready to exclaim "Nothing," I have been so burdened and worn as to be obliged to pray to forget, and to take every lawful mode to turn my thoughts to other less exciting themes.

I wish now to ask my theological friends to consider the character of my inner life. In all outward manifestations I took the theory of religion trained into me, and acted before others on the assumption of its truth. But my inner life was after this fashion:—as to prayer in private, I

found great comfort in the preface to the Lord's prayer, "*After this manner* pray ye." It was a short comprehensive prayer, which amounted to this, that God's will might be done on earth as in Heaven; that our temporal wants might be supplied; that we might do right and escape evil. This I could sincerely feel and pray when all *details* distressed me. But still better, this prayer began, "Our *Father*." Now to me, through my whole life, this word "Father" has been associated with unparalleled tenderness, sympathy, and love; with truth, justice, and all that was loveable. I could not apply it to God without such associations, and so it comforted me —and that was all. But the prayers, hymns, and sermons conformed to the *theory* of religion were occasions when I had to struggle with feelings of disgust and abhorrence. Especially at times, was this so in reference to the *atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ*, until I formed a curious mental habit of letting these things pass through my mind as something I did not understand, and then there seemed to flow in a vague impression of something better, I knew not what.

It is theological *theories* forced on mankind through popes, emperors, and church councils, by pains and penalties, which has mystified that grand question of life, "What must we do to be saved?" so that the answer to almost every other practical question is more clear than this. What do the great masses of men suppose that *they themselves* are to do if ever they become "regenerated." Multitudes imagine that, by going to camp meetings, or conference meetings, or in "revivals," some divine efflux will come over them, of which the chief evidence is, that the mind is filled with joy, or other delightful emotions Others deem it a mysterious change, that takes place sometimes in sleep, without any voluntary act of the individual. Others suppose it to consist in certain emotions or mental acts, in reference to Jesus Christ, that come by divine influence. Others consider it an act of the intellect or will, of which emotions may be the preceding state, or may follow as a result. Probably the vast majority regard it as a mysterious, indescribable event, that no one can understand till it is experienced, and which cannot be made intelligible to an "unrenewed mind."

Thousands of excellent, conscientious persons are moving about with dark minds and heavy hearts, who would instantly become happy and consistent followers of Christ if these theories could be removed from their minds, and they were sure that an earnest spirit of obedience to Jesus Christ is what is required; to which the promises of hope and encouragement are made; which is the highest evidence of regeneration, and the chief feature of that "love to God" required; while all emotions, frames, and feelings are nothing without it. Thousands of children and young persons, religiously trained, are held back from a religious life because it is conceived of as so mysterious, uninviting and painful that they can neither understand or desire it. At the same time, it is true that, *after children have been trained wrong*, so that bad habits of mind are dominant, the clear understanding of this subject will not, in many cases, make it easy for them to commence a religious life, or make it look desirable.

The fearful sanctions of eternity cannot very directly be brought to bear on the minds of young children without great risk of entirely false impressions. We see, in the Old Testament, that when God was training *a race*, in the infancy of its development He made visible appearances, used temporal motives, and made no appeals to the sanctions of the invisible world. Like the parents just referred to, his first aim seemed to be to teach *habits of obedience* to God's temporal laws, while, at the same time, He displayed his sympathy, mercy and love. And among his ancient people men became his obedient children by just such training as is now best fitted to young children.

But when the race was farther advanced, so as to be able to act more by reason and on *general principles*, and when His religion, by new motives and forces, was to be extended from one nation to all the world, *then the Creator came himself;* [Christ said, "the Father sent me,"] and while disclosing those most terrific sanctions of the invisible world, at the same time exhibited such a manifestation of His pity, sympathy, and *self-sacrificing love* as renders these terrors safe and effective in such a conjuncture, as they would not be without.

With these two classes of motives intensified, such a moral power has been generated, leading to self-denying efforts to educate and save mankind, as never existed before. In the case of the writer, the power of these terrible sanctions *alone* has been illustrated. In other cases, the power of Christ's love and example have been the leading motives. It is the *union of both*, clearly appreciated, and especially brought to bear on those who form the character of childhood and youth, that eventually is to renew the whole race, and bring every human being to perfect obedience to *all* the laws of the Creator.

TALE FROM THE GERMAN.

In that beautiful part of Germany, which borders on the Rhine, there is a noble castle, which as you travel on the western banks of the river, you may see lifting its ancient towers on the opposite side, above the grove of trees which are about as old as itself. About forty years ago there lived in that castle a noble gentleman whom we call a Baron. The Baron had an only son, who was not only a comfort to his father, but a blessing to all who lived on his father's land.

It happened on a certain occasion, that this young man being from home, there came a French gentleman to see the Baron. As soon as this gentleman came into the castle he began to talk of his Heavenly Father in terms that chilled the old man's blood! on which the Baron reproved him, saying, "are you not afraid of offending God, who reigns above, by speaking in such a manner."

The gentleman said that he knew nothing about God; for he had never seen him.

The Baron did not notice at this time what the gentleman said, but the next morning took him about his castle and ground, and took occasion first to show him a very beautiful picture that hung on the wall.

The gentleman admired the picture very much; and said "Whoever drew this picture knows very well how to use his pencil."

"My son drew that picture," said the Baron.

"Then your son is a very clever man," replied the gentleman.

The Baron then went with his visitor into the garden, and shewed him many beautiful flowers and plantations of forest trees.

"Who has the ordering of this garden?" asked the gentleman.

"My son," replied the Baron; "he knows every plant, I may say, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall."

"Indeed," said the gentleman, "I shall think very highly of him soon."

The Baron then took him into the village, and showed him a small, neat cottage, where his son established a school, and where he caused all young children, who had lost their parents, to be received and nourished at his own expense.

The children in the house looked so innocent and happy, that the gentleman was very much pleased, and when he returned to the castle he said to the Baron, "what a happy man you are to have so good a son!"

"How do you know I have a good son?"

"Because I have seen his works, and I know that he must be both good and clever if he has done all you have shown me."

"But you have never seen him."

"No, but I know him very well; because I judge of him by his work."

"You do; and now please to draw near this window, and tell me what you observe from thence."

"Why, I see the sun travelling through the sky, and shedding its glories over one of the finest countries in the world; and I behold a mighty river at my feet, and a vast range of woods. I see pasture grounds, and orchards, and vineyards; and cattle, and sheep feeding in green fields, and many thatched cottages scattered here and there."

"And do you see any thing to be admired in all this? Is there any thing pleasant, or lovely, or cheerful in all that is spread before you."

"Do you think I want common sense? or that I have lost the use of my eyes? my friend," said the gentleman, somewhat angrily, "that I should not be able to relish the charms of such a scene as this?"

"Well then," said the Baron, "If you are able to judge of my son's good character by seeing his good works, which are poor and imperfect, how does it happen that you form no judgment of the goodness of God, by witnessing such wonders of his handy works as are now before you? Let me never hear you, my good friend, again say that you know not God, unless you would have me suppose that you have lost the use of your senses."

SECRET PRAYER.

We believe in prayer; not that it changes the wise plans of the Creator, nor that it has any influence upon his mind to do otherwise with us for praying than He would do did we not pray. "God is of one mind, and who can turn him." "He changes not." These are teachings of the Bible, and we think very consistent with reason. In the first place, God knows what we stand in need of better than we do ourselves. He knows what we must have in order that we may exist at all.—Though we may fail to ask Him for any of these things, still He does not forget us, nor fail to bestow on us those things of which we daily stand in need. Again, we may offer daily prayers to Him, and yet not receive the things for which we pray, because we ask amiss. His great goodness will allow Him to bestow only good gifts upon us, such as will prove in all cases beneficial, and promote our happiness.

But some may think there is no utility in prayer, if God will give us all things without our asking Him. We think otherwise. The object of prayer properly is not to change the disposition of God, or that He may conform to our ways; but it is, when we are erring, to work in us such a change of disposition and conduct that we shall bear a nearer resemblance to Him. He is the one that should remain unchanged, for in Him dwells all perfection. We are the ones that stand in need of change, for in us are found many evils and many foolish desires, that incline us to wander from the path of rectitude, which leads to happiness. As God knows all things we stand in need of, it would not seem necessary that we should use a multitude of words when we address Him; and as He is everywhere present, it would not appear essential that what we have to say should be expressed in a loud tone of voice. We should have no desire to be seen or heard of men. The Divine Teacher knew what would be good for us,—what would be most favourable for our improvement,—and He directed us to enter into our closets and in secret to pray to our Father, who would reward us openly. When secret and alone we can have no desire to be hypocritical; no desire to make a fine display of ourselves, either in appearance or in a jingling flow of high-sounding, but unmeaning words.

Some persons think they cannot be Christians unless they make long and loud prayers in the presence of gazing multitudes. This is a wide mistake. Our Christianity would be quite as pure though no mortal should ever hear us utter a prayer.

We should pray at times in secret; should let our minds dwell upon the great perfections of God's character. We should, when alone, let the sacred teachings of Christ impress our hearts and enlighten our understanding. We should let the spirit of meekness and love dwell within our souls, and when we mingle with our fellow beings they may see our good works, and thereby we shall be openly blessed. He who is only a hearer of the word is not blessed, but the doer is. Then we should study to learn what the will of the Lord is, make our prayers consistent with his will, conform our lives to the order of his providences, believing firmly that He doeth all things well; and our lives then would surely pass in peace.

AFFLICTION.

Oft must we inly cry "Lama Sabacthani,
If we would crucify, overcome sense,
Oft must we inly know seasons of bitter woe
Hear spirit voices low calling us hence.

As darkness and death are the gateways of heaven,
So 'midst sorrow and pain all insight is given
The pillar of cloud in prosperity's light
Is the pillar of flame in adversity's night.

We shrink from the pain, but the pain brings the good,
'Tis the torturing fever that purges the blood
The chosen of God are the broken, despised,
The forsaken are those that live unchastised

In dreariest wastes sweet flowers have their birth,
To bring in the stars night curtains the earth,
All exquisite tones that ears ever heard,
Were the voice of some groans that affliction had stirred.

THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT.

HARK ye! This is the sentiment of large-hearted humanity. And 'tis a glorious fact in the history of the earth that this sentiment gathers increasing weight and strength. See that poor unfortunate at the bar, charged with cool, deliberate murder. The evidence seems all-powerful. As the case goes on the conviction of guilt increases until every one is morally satisfied of the prisoner's awful condition. The defence simply establishes a doubt, points out a link of evidence wanting and the *possibility* of innocency, and thus secures the sympathy of the court. There is something to be *supposed* to complete the certainty of murder and that the prisoner is the murderer. Then an appeal is made to that charity "which thinketh no evil," which never allows impressions to form themselves into *convictions*, and where a supposition is to be made, the *best* and not the worst, *innocence* and not *guilt* is the safer course to be chosen. Listen to the Judge, "*The prisoner at the bar is entitled* TO THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT. If *in your minds there be* A SINGLE DOUBT *you must cast it in the prisoner's favour.* The law requires that WE LEAN TO THE SIDE OF HUMANITY, AND EVERY SHADE OF DOUBT *must be used in favour of the prisoner.*" And the Jury understand the Judge and they honour this sentiment, and their inmost souls feel intensely this is the course of equity and benevolence, and they record a verdict in harmony with their feelings and the BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT. And the people who waited in death-like silence and anxiety, who hear the sounds of *not guilty*, allow their pent up breath to issue forth in one great shout of applause, unheeding the sanctity of the court that their holier human feelings may have vent in rapturous approbation. The court, and country, and all, after a fair hearing of the case and a possibility of innocency having been established, all are agreed in the wisdom and mercy of the decision. And that the prisoner was and is entitled to the *benefit of the doubt.*

Now seeing we approve this sentiment, this conduct, this decision, let us allow it free scope, let us carry it forth into every day action, into our entire life. Let that charity which thinketh no evil be the presiding spirit whenever anything is to be supposed, let the best and not the worst, innocence and not guilt have the *benefit of the doubt.* How often in common life are charges brought against others, on proof that would not be entertained one single moment in a court of justice. If it is right of men as judges, or jurors, or magistrates, to hold any one innocent until they are clearly proved guilty; does it not behove us as Christians, in all our intercourse with our fellow-men, to conduct ourselves upon a similar principle. Exaggeration on the side of the worst is the greatest curse of common life. There are some of mankind who have fallen into this way of judging of men and things. Oh! how unhappy they must be in the creation of that uneasiness and suspicion whereby they torment others. Whether the man be a stranger or a neighbour, a friend or an enemy, we ought ever to cling to the best view of him and his doings, that definite evidence will allow.

This sentiment has entered most largely into our courts in the trials of our very worst criminal cases. It is considered the safest course to pursue. It was not always so, but the heart of the whole country is on its side now, and would rejoice to see it more and more developed and gain greater ground. It is regarded as christian, honourable, charitable, and safe, to give the benefit of the doubt. We ask for it a more extensive influence than it has ever had, and that in all cases and questions which come before us, wherever there is anything to be supposed, wherever there is evidence of a conflicting nature on any subject judicial, political, social, or religious, the *best* and not the worst ought to be chosen.

'Tis a curious parodox in the conduct of a vast multitude of good religious people, of christian men and women of our country, that the *worst* and not the best propositions or tenets of religious faith are clung to with astonishing tenacity, and they consider themselves safer in this position than in any other. We will show what we mean under a few topics which excite religious controversy. Some christians believe that this earth is beautiful, good, and fair, and under the blessing of heaven. As God pronounced it good, very good, so it still is good.

Another view is held of the matter, that it is a waste howling wilderness, a cursed place of thorns and thistles. We cannot understand how any one can suppose himself safer under the *latter* conviction than the *former*. Again, regarding *man*, who is believed by some to be made in the image of God, or only a little lower than the angels crowned with glory and honour;—by others he is regarded as a depraved, demon-natured, hell-deserving creature. We cannot understand how this the latter article of faith can be considered as safer than the former. How much contention has there been in the church concerning the extent of salvation. By one party it has been limited to a few, a very few, and that the great mass of beings who have peopled and do people this earth, would be eternally lost; others have accepted views widely different, "That God will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." That Christ is not a *partial* but a *universal* Saviour, and must reign till all enemies are put under his feet. Again, God is regarded by one portion of the church as vindictive, demanding the blood of his Son, to satisfy his justice and appease his wrath; another section says, no such thing, "God so loved the world that he gave his son to be the saviour of the world." We can picture to our minds these *several views* on their trial. The cursedness of earth, depravity of human nature, partial redemption of Jesus, vindictive wrath of God, littleness of Heaven, largeness of hell, *versus*, The blessedness of earth, dignity of human nature, universal salvation, love of God, largeness of heaven, destruction of hell. We cannot but admit weighty evidence is adduced by both sides, for and against these views. The Judge sums up, he must remark, that "there is a peculiarity on one side, i.e. foul charges are preferred against the character of Earth, Man, Christ, God and Heaven. "The gospel requires," says he, "that we lean to the side of humanity, and to that side you must give the benefit of every shade of doubt." Yes, my brother, as the heart of the world beats freer, fuller, and larger, the whole of humankind will ultimately declare that God, and Christ, and Heaven, are holier, wiser and better, than any conception of them that ever entered our minds.

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

There is a class of men who claim to be lineal descendants of the apostles of Christ. They derive their commission as Christian teachers,—it is alleged,—from Peter, and Paul, and John. All other Teachers are acting without authority, against the divinely ordained plan for the government of the church, and cannot therefore pretend, in any just sense, to be Ministers of Christ. Of course these people must trace this line of succession through that ancient church which they are continually branding as apostate and corrupt. But we know of nothing in the Scriptures to justify this lofty and exclusive claim. The New Testament nowhere enjoins a particular form of government for the Christian Church. The commission given to the apostles was peculiar. They had power "to bind and to loose," for the order and peace of the early churches, and the furtherance of Christianity in the world. But this authority, needful in the establishment of a new religion, was restricted to those upon whom it was first conferred. It remained with them while they lived, and ceased when they died. If this is denied, we are really curious to know where the successors of the Apostles can now be found? We desire to look upon them and hear them for ourselves. When did they *see the Lord*, and obtain a commission directly from his lips? Can they speak in different tongues? Will their word give sight to the blind and restore the dead to life? The genuine successors of the apostles should exibit the same signs, and vindicate their claims by performing the same marvellous works. Does the Romish Priesthood, or the Episcopal Ministry, possess any such gifts as these? We have the same diseases now as those with which men were afflicted in primitive times; can the successors of the apostles remove them as Paul, and Peter, and John were wont to do? The truth obviously is, that the mission of the apostles was special; that the office which they filled was not designed to be permanent in the Church, and without irreverence it may be said there is as much reason to expect a succession of Christs, as successors of the apostles whom Christ ordained to *found* the Christian Church.

ANNIHILATION.

The possibility of ceasing to be is a painful thought. The probability of it I do not cherish. I aspire after immortality. Will not He who planted the desire secure the gratification?

I must not forget that I am on a journey to the grave, a place of silence and decay. Is not death a destroyer? Have not the dead ceased to be? Am I a living thinking being, whose existence is independent of my bodily organization; or will physical dissolution put an end to intellectual and reflective life and exercise?

Death is indeed a great change, yet I will not fear it as the end of my being. If from the egg, with somewhat of corruption and dissolution, by a principle of hidden life, there is evolved and matured the winged warbler to soar in the skies, may I not hope that death will break the shell of immortality, and confer on me a higher life? To live without the body would be to ascend a higher grade than I now stand upon. Why not? Many are the degrees of difference between my capacity of action and reflection now, and in my infancy. To live in the spirit would not demand a greater progression than has been accomplished already. Why may I not continue to rise?

I cannot think that the exercise of my living power depends upon my body, or its organs. I will not fear that death, in dissolving these, can destroy me. I can loose my limbs and retain the power of thought. Sleep, the image of death, may lock up all my bodily senses, and yet my mind and heart may be awake.

My bodily powers are not myself, they are my agents, or rather my instruments, and my being does not depend upon their continuance. I employ them as I use inanimate matter to do my will. I use my limbs as my crutches, and when I loose or injure the one, I substitute the other. When my eyes fail, I employ the aid of my spectacles, and my glasses like the organ of sight, keep me acquainted with external things. My will employs my senses, or discards them at pleasure. If I were blind I would be what I now am. I would as soon think that the loss of my ear trumpet, my staff, or my spy-glass would annihilate me as that I must cease to be when death dissolves my bodily organs.

My life is in my mind; my joys and my sorrows are but instrumentally connected with my body. The body is only one of the avenues to the mind, and the mind may exist though one of its portals may be closed. It is the mind that sees and hears. Sensation is no more than the handmaid to perception, which is in the mind. My life, the life of my mind, is in reflection. My reflection is not dependent upon the continuance of my perceptions for its existence or happiness, but may be well supplied by my conceptions and recollections. Conception and memory need not be tributary to the senses. My living being is not made up in hearing sweet or jarring sounds, or seeing beautiful or offensive sights, or in experiencing other grateful or painful sensations; but rather in reflecting upon what I receive from these and all other sources. Then I can live when all these fountains are dried up.

I am not a compound being, but a simple existence. Leaving my body may be, and will be, its dissolution, and yet I may live—may remain the same permanent and continued living being. Changes in my body, gradual or sudden, can affect me little more than changes of weather or residence. I am one. My consciousness is simple. I feel myself to be the same being that I was a quarter of a century ago, though every particle of matter then in my body, has gone from me. I see not why I may not at once give up all it now contains, and survive the loss.

If my body were dissolved I could enjoy or suffer, at least as much as now. My highest enjoyment are not sensations; nor are the first perceptions of outward things so pleasurable or painful, as when the mind, by reflection, has attained their highest comprehension, and seen their full bearings and relations. Seeing there are boundless fields, unfathomable depths, and infinite heights for reflection, and for the endless exercise of memory and imagination, and seeing that even while in the body I can shut out the things of sense, and live in myself, why may I not expect a continued higher degree of life, when I leave the body?

May not death give me an angel's powers and opportunities to live and to learn, what I can not attain while incarcerated in the body? Is it not the gravitation of my tenement that keeps me on earth, and will

not death, which destroys my prison, be the messenger of my emancipation? I cannot fear that I shall perish in the ruins of my present abode. I am not afraid of annihilation.

THE RECONCILIATION.

"Well, I think it's likely; but don't tease me any more. Your brother has married a poor girl,—one whom I forbade him to marry; and I won't forgive him if they starve together."

This speech was addressed to a lovely girl, scarcely eighteen, beautiful as the lily that hides itself beneath the dark waters. She was parting the silvery locks on her father's high, handsome forehead, of which her own was a miniature, and pleading the cause of her delinquent brother, who had married in opposition to her father's will, and had consequently been disinherited.

Mr. Wheatly was a rich old gentleman. He had two children, the disobedient son, and the beautiful girl before spoken of.—The fond girl went on pleading:

"Dear father, do forgive him: you don't know what a beautiful girl he has married, and—"

"I think it's likely," said the old man; "but don't tease me, and open the door a little; this plaguy room smokes so."

"Well," continued Ellen, "won't you just see her now—she is so good—and the little boy, he looks so innocent."

"What did you say?" interrupted the father; "a boy! have I a grandchild? Why, Ellen, I never knew that before! but I think it's likely. Well, now, give me my chocolate, and then go to your music lesson."

Ellen left him. The old man's heart began to relent.

"Well," he went on, "Charles was always a good boy, a little wild or so at college, but I indulged him; and he was always good to his old father, for all; but he disobeyed me by marrying this poor girl; yet, as my old friend and fellow-soldier, Tom Bonner, used to say, we must forgive. Poor Tom! I would give all my old shoes I have got to know whatever become of him. If I could but find him or one of his children! Heaven grant they are not suffering. This plaguy, smoky room—how my eyes water. If I did but know who this girl was that my Charles married; but I have never inquired her name. I'll find out and—"

"I think it's likely," said the old man.

Ellen led into the room a beautiful boy about two years old. His curly hair and rosy cheeks could not but make one love him.

"Who is that?" said the old man, wiping his eyes.

"That—that is Charles' boy," said Ellen, and throwing one of her arms round her father's neck, with the other she placed the child on his knee. The child looked tenderly up into his face, and lisped out—

"Grandpa, what makes you cry so?"

The old man clasped the child to his bosom, and kissed him again and again. After this emotion had a little subsided, he bade the child tell his name.

"Thomas Bonner Wheatly," said the boy, "I am named after grandpa.

"What do I hear?" said the old man; "Thomas Bonner your grandfather?"

"Yes," lisped the boy, "and he lives with ma, at———."

"Get me my cane," said the old man, "and come Ellen; be quick, child."

They started off at a quick pace, which soon brought them to the poor, though neat lodgings of his son. There he beheld his old friend, Thomas Bonner, seated in one corner, weaving baskets, while his swathed limbs showed how unable he was to perform the necessary task. His lovely daughter, the wife of Charles, was preparing their frugal meal, and Charles was out seeking employment to support his needy family.

"It's all my fault," sobbed the old man as he embraced his friend, who was petrified with amazement.

"Come," said Mr. Wheatley, "come all of you home with me, we will all live together, there is plenty of room in my house for us all."

By this time Charles had come. He asked his father's forgiveness, which was freely given, and Ellen was almost mad with joy.

"Oh, how happy we shall be," she exclaimed; "and father will love our little Thomas so, and he'll be your pet, won't he, father?" "Aye," said the old man, "I think it's very likely."

REASONS FOR REJECTING THE DOCTRINE OF A TRIUNE DEITY.

Preaching the doctrine of the Trinity has become much more common of late, we learn, than it has been for some time past. The marked progress of Unitarian views has aroused the defence of the Ministers of Trinitarian Churches; and in our own town and neighbouring towns as well as throughout our country. It is a curious fact that it is conceded the danger to the old views arises from the Unitarians within the pale of these churches, more than from the Unitarians without, and ministers are blamed and called upon to lift their voices against that general drifting away from what is called Evangelical Christianity.

Courses of theological lectures are arranged for churches, and young men's societies and collegiate places. From the *Inquirer*, we learn, that at Exeter, the Rev. Chancellor Harrington has commenced a series of controversial discourses on that subject. The first was delivered last Sunday morning, when the preacher's text was from St. John —"Ye believe in God, believe also in me." He remarked that it was now the habit of clergymen to eschew discoursing on the doctrine of the Trinity; but supposing it to be true, it ought not to be reserved for special discussion by the erudite, or treated as speculative, but ought to be preached from the pulpit to the people, because a doctrine so fundamental to our religion could not but be of prime importance, and very influential on the believer's conduct. He explained in what manner the doctrine practically affected pious living. God showed boundless, inconceivable love to man by sending down to earth His only begotten son—one person of the Trinity—to die for men;—but take from Christ his divine nature, and we lose one striking illustration of God's love. He glanced rapidly at some passages in scripture which supported Trinitarian views, referred to the Arian schism, and promised in his next discourse to describe the office of the Holy Ghost, for he observed that Christians owed distinct duties to each person of the Godhead—thus to the Father as such, to the Son as such, and to the Holy Spirit as such, duties were owing.

We think the mission of our church at this time is to correct a very false statement generally made on the subject of the Trinity, it is affirmed we reject it because it is above our understanding and reason. This is not so, as Dr. Drummond affirms:—

"The Unitarian REJECTS the doctrine of the Trinity, not because it is beyond, but because it is contradictory to reason, as much as transubstantiation. The apostle tells us (Rom. i, 20) That the invisible things of God from the creation of the world,—even his eternal power and Godhead are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. But the existence of three persons in one God was never clearly—not even dimly seen in any of the works of creation. They all exhibit proofs that the supreme omnipotent contriver and fabricator is ONE.

The Unitarian REJECTS the doctrine of the Trinity, because it subverts the fundamental principle of revealed, as well as of natural religion. 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord,' a truth confirmed by our blessed Saviour, who, when solicited by the tempter to worship him, replied, 'thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and HIM ONLY shalt thou serve.'

The Unitarian REJECTS the doctrine of the Trinity, because it contradicts all that we are capable of comprehending of the infinite perfections of Jehovah. It contradicts his *Self-Existence*, by identifying him with Christ, whom it acknowledges to be begotten.

His *Immensity*, by confining him, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, in a human form.

His *Simplicity*, by representing him as being compounded of three persons.

His *Spirituality*, by making him incarnate.

His *Invisibility*, for he was seen.

His *Immutability*, for he was in the form of a servant.

His *Impassibility*, for he suffered.

His *Immortality*, for he died.

His *Omnipotence*, for there were things not his to give.

His *Omniscience*, for there were things he did not know.

Consequently, it denies the infinite perfection of all the other attributes of Deity. For if any being falls short of infinitude in any one perfection, he falls short in all.

He REJECTS it, because it confounds attributes with persons, qualities with substance, humanity with deity. It *materializes* our ideas of the eternal mind, and by teaching that it can be essentially connected with corporeal forms, yields an easy introduction to image worship. Hence we need not be surprised, if the great majority of those who embrace the doctrine of the Trinity, have statues, waxen figures, and pictures, not only of God the Son, but of God the Father, and of God the Holy Ghost.

He REJECTS it, because it is undefinable and incapable of explanation, as is clearly testified by those who have written upon it most learnedly. Their treatises and volumes, composed with the avowed object of proving and elucidating the doctrine, present us only with a chaos of unintelligibilities, insomuch that it requires some effort of faith to believe that their authors understood themselves.

He REJECTS it, because, so far as the scriptures are concerned, it is altogether a doctrine of inference. Were such a doctrine true, it is reasonable to suppose that they would teach it clearly and distinctly; and that whole pages would be occupied in its explanation Instead of this, a number of texts are collected together from various quarters, distorted from the meaning which they convey in their proper situation, and are made, by their new location, to speak a language not their own.

He REJECTS it, because all the proofs of it, singly and collectively, have not the strength of the first commandment. Trinitarianism betrays the weakness of her cause, by having recourse to such auxiliaries as certain idiomatic phrases and grammatical constructions, which, in the judgment of the most learned scholars, do not contain the meaning she would extract from them.

He REJECTS it, because it leads to the most fanciful perversions of the word of God. Under the influence of its imagination, even learned, and in other respects, rational divines, are led into the most egregious errors in their interpretation of the scriptures. Thus they find the three persons of the Trinity in the command given by our Saviour to the disciples, to baptize, (Mat. xxviii, 19,) though it says not a syllable of three persons, but simply enjoins to baptize into the name of the Father, *i.e.*, to initiate them, by the rite of baptism into a profession of belief in the one Supreme God —in the Son by whom he revealed his will—and in the Holy Spirit, or miraculous agency of the Spirit of God, by which the truth of the Gospel was established. It gives no more countenance to the doctrine of three persons in one God, than to that of three Gods in one person. The latter is as rational and scriptural as the former, and it is surprising that no one has maintained it, since nothing would be more easy than to find arguments in its support."

LITERARY EXTRACTS.

A MINISTERIAL AUCTIONEER.

THE reverend and eccentric Rowland Hill was preaching in the open air, in that suburban part of London denominated Moorfields, from the Song of Solomon i. 5, "I am black but comely;" which he explained as having reference to the Church of Christ, which in the sight of the world was black, black as the tents of Kedar, but in the sight of her glorified Head was comely, comely as the curtains of Solomon. While enlarging on the subject, Lady Anne Erskine happened to pass that way. She asked her servants what was the cause of the very large assemblage of people? They replied, that it was the renowned Rowland Hill that was addressing the people. Lady Anne said she had long cherished a desire to hear that eccentric man preach, and should now have it fully gratified, and desired her charioteer to bring her as near as possible, that she might hear every word he said. She was soon in the rear of the temporary pulpit, the only place where it was possible to get near him.

The gorgeous accession that had taken place to the congregation, and the brilliant and sparkling appearance of Lady Anne, attracted the attention of the congregation more than the preacher, but Rowland Hill's observant eyes detected the movements, and he resolved on a hazardous but effective remedy. He paused, and then said: "Brethren, I bespeak your attention for a few moments. I am now about to hold an auction or vendue. I have here a lady and her whole equipage to expose to public sale, but the lady is the principal and only object I wish to dispose of at present. Well, there are already three earnest bidders in the field The first is the world: well, and what will you give for her? I will give honours, wealth, and pleasure. That won't do—she's worth more than that, for she shall continue to live when the honours, wealth, and pleasure you have it in your power to bestow shall vanish as the darkness of night before orient beams: you can't have her. The next bidder is the devil: well and what will you give for her? I will give all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. That won't do either, for she shall continue to exist when the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them shall have vanished as a snow-wreath beneath a vernal shower: you can't have her. But list! I hear the voice of another—it is the Lord Jesus Christ: well, and what will you give for her? I will give an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, eternal in the heavens. Blessed Jesus! Just as I expected—just like the liberality that thou art wont to display! Well, I will place her at thy disposal—she is black but comely—and thou shalt be the purchaser. Let heaven and earth attest this irrevocable contract." Turning to Lady Anne, he said, "Madame, have you heard this contract that heaven and earth hath irrevocably attested? Remember that, from this time forth and forevermore, you are the property of the Lord Jesus. He died to redeem you—you are purchased with his blood. Can you, dare you reject it?"

The arrow thus sped at a venture found its way to the heart of Lady Anne, and she became eminently useful in her day and generation.

SOCIAL CIRCLE.

A WORD FOR THE GIRLS.

We never expect to tire in interest or in labour for the girls. We see so much to hope for in relation to the young females of our country, their good lies upon our heart like a perpetual inspiration. When we see girls educated in the schools of folly and fashion, selling themselves body and soul to the blandishments of the shopkeeper and mantua-maker, idling their young lives away in gossip and nonsense, forgetting all that is greatest and best in their minds and hearts, ignoring all womanly aspirations and aims, giving no heed to the preparations for life's greatest duties and joys, our heart bleeds within us. How many good people are striving to improve the homes of the world. How many are seeking to awaken in human hearts a better ideal of home life; a truer estimate of home virtue, a more thorough insight into home duties. How limited will be their success unless the hearts of the girls can be warmed with a burning zeal for improvement. Woman is the mistress, the presiding genius of home, and she must become true to herself, true to her womanly qualities of mind and heart, ere the homes of this world can be what they should be. She must cease to worship at the shrine of folly; she must cease to place her sole good in marriage; she must cease to regard herself simply as the doll or plaything of man; she must cease to desire to be his pet, or anybody's pet; she must cease to lean on father, brother, husband for support, for instruction. She must feel that she has a mind to be educated, a soul to be taught the way of duty. She must learn to be independent in her opinions, her actions, her duties, and aims. Every girl should have some aim in life, and educate herself for some place and duty. Her education should be solid and thorough. Why should the boys be all their minority, learning agriculture with the best books, instructions and experiences they can get, and the girls that are to be their wives be ignorant of everything that pertains to their future duties and trials. Why should it be the province of the boys to know so much and the girls to know so little?

We want to see the girls of this age wake up to a new life and every one of them fix on some great attainment that they will secure. First of all, let them aim to be true women, intelligent, thoughtful, loving all that is truly lovely and nothing that is not, demanding of all their associates, that they shall be honourable and respectful. Secondly, let them determine that they will know the most they can know about the practical and useful duties of life, that their hands shall be taught to be useful and their minds active, come what fortune may. Thirdly, let them learn how to preserve their health, to care for and do for the sick, to be judicious managers of households, sick-rooms, nurseries, gardens, dairies, and whatever falls to the common lot of men and women. Fourthly, let them learn to do something by which they could earn an honest and comfortable living were they to be thrown on their own resources. Fifthly, let them read and acquire useful knowledge. With such efforts the girls of to-day may be glorious women for the next forty years; virtue and happiness would then smile upon the homes of our country, and crown our land with every blessing. Well did the Wise King observe, "A virtuous woman, her price is above rubies. her children arise and call her blessed, her husband praiseth her, her own works praise her in the gates."

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

Rhode Island abolished the death penalty in 1852, since which time there have been but two murders committed.

It is a singular fact, that when the Indian swears, he swears in English. There are no oaths in the Indian vernacular.

The Sandwich Island alphabet has twelve letters; the Burmese, nineteen; the Italian, twenty; the Bengalese, twenty-one; the Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldee, Samaritan, and Latin, twenty-two each; the French, twenty-three; the Greek, twenty-four; the German and Dutch, twenty-six each; the Spanish and Slavonic, twenty-seven each; the Arabic, twenty-eight; the Persian and Coptic, thirty-two; the Georgian, thirty-five; the Armenian, thirty-eight; the Russian, forty-one; the Muscovite, forty-three; the Sancrit and Japanese, fifty; the Ethiopic and Tartarian, two hundred and two, and the Chinese about forty thousand.

Miss Dix.—In a letter to the *London Times* Mr. R. Chambers affirms that the appointment of the Lunacy Commission for Scotland is wholly owing to the exertions of this lady. "It is a great discredit," says he, "that the existence of such evils as are brought to light was overlooked by the clergy, officials, and Philanthrophists of my native country, and brought to light by a fragile woman, of such weakly constitution that she can scarcely walk half a mile, an American by birth, a Unitarian by creed, —a person wholly without local influence, and who could have no motive for interference beyond the promptings of a noble benevolence."

At the annual meeting of the West Riding Unitarian Mission, the Rev. J. Owen, of Lydgate, remarked, "That they found other sects more disposed than formerly to recognise them as fellow Christians; and, as an instance of it, he stated that the incumbent of the parish in which he resided sent a message, previously to the Whit-Monday anniversary, suggesting that the Unitarian scholars should meet with those of the Church schools, and that they should join in singing a hymn. This suggestion was gladly acceded to. The United meeting took place and was regarded with general satisfaction."

A Little Boy's Prayer.—A little boy after saying the nightly prayers which had been taught him, was quite tenacious of what he called praying his own way. He had a large number of brothers and sisters, whose needs and peculiarities he sometimes made the subject of his petitions. On one occasion, at commencing his exercise, he was overcome with sleep. Wrestling with his stupor, he said:—

"Oh, Lord, bless Elizabeth, and make her better than she is."

His head fell back on his pillow, but soon rousing, he murmured drowsily, "Bless Henry too." It was in vain—the tongue refused its office; so he added indistinctly:

"Oh, Lord, I can't—there are many of 'em," and he sank into the deep slumber of childhood.

At another time when conducting this exercise in a somewhat more wakeful manner, he said:—

"Lord, please to bless father and give him a new heart Be so kind as to bless Mary, my little sister, and give her a new heart. Oh, Lord, bless mother —but you need not give her a new heart, for she could not have any better one than she's got, and I don't see how she'd go to work to be any better woman than she is now."

A correspondent sends us the following gem of a pious advertisement, taken from the *Gardener's Chronicle*, of the 11th ult.:—

WANTED.—A Gardener, by a Christian family residing five miles from London; must be young and active, understanding his profession, and willing to make himself useful in the house. He must be savingly acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ. Apply by letter, p.p., etc.

Advance Payment a Proof of Sanity—In two disputed *Will Cases* tried at Boston, recently, the Judges admitted as material evidence of the sanity of the Testators, proof that they had paid a few days previous to the making of their Wills for their Newspapers in advance; thereby saving a good discount which was allowed for advance pay. This had considerable influence in the decision of the cases for the sanity of the Testators.

Clerical Assumption.—Lately a Clergyman, in the Established Church, upon hearing that a gentleman of his congregation had taken the chair at a Dissenting Missionary meeting,—wrote to say, he hoped he would not present himself at the holy communion, as, after such conduct, he should be obliged to refuse it to him, whereupon the aggrieved gentlemen, perceiving no sin in the part he had taken, and loathe to be excommunicated from the church of his choice, wrote to the Bishop, who told him not to refuse it. The clergyman then wrote to say, that though he was obliged to give it, yet, as priest of the high God, he would, and must withhold the blessing from the sacred elements. We can vouch for the truth of the above.

A Different Picture.—We have looked on the picture of clerical assumption, now let us see a one of christian charity. Sometime ago an affectionate father, a good man, lost a son by suicide. His clergyman would give him no comfort. The Baptist and Methodist ministers could give him no comfort. "To whom then," said he in anguish "can I go; must I bury my son without any religious service?" He was at last recommended to an old heterodox preacher and elder who was a Universalist. The bereaved father went. He was received with plain, cheerful politeness by the elder, and told his tale of sorrow. The elder heard it all, and could not refrain from mingling his tears with those of this afflicted father. In reply to the father's request, the elder said he would officiate at the funeral. "And do you think you can find any passage of scripture that will give me comfort?" said the father. "I think I can," the elder replied; "at any rate I will try." At the appointed hour elder Barnes arrived at the house of mourning. A large multitude were present. It was a time of great solemnity. The dead young man—and more especially the manner of his death—the audible weeping of father and mother, and of the brothers and sisters, made a funeral of deeper gloom than usual. A hymn was sung, a prayer (very appropriate) was offered to God, when the preacher, standing on the table, opened his bible. Every eye was fixed upon him. "Our text (said he) will be taken from the 2nd Epistle of Paul to the Coriathians, 1st chapter, 3rd and 4th verses.—'Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforteth us in *all* our tribulations, that *we* may be able to comfort *them who are in any trouble* by the comfort wherewith *we* ourselves are comforted of God.'"

"He's found it," said the father aloud, his eyes glistening, his tears running, "he's found the passage, O my God." All animated with excitement, they listened to the sermon, and *such a sermon!* The family never had reason to regret that they were recommended to him.

DIAMOND DUST.

Heaven is first a temper, then a place.

Reason is the test of ridicule—not ridicule the test of truth.

The world may make a man unfortunate, but not miserable; that is from himself.

No man can avoid his own company—so he had best make it as good as possible.

Rum has sunk more seamen than all the tempests that ever blew.

If you desire the happiness of your child, teach him obedience and self-restraint.

Pleasure is seldom found where it is sought, our brightest blazes of gladness being commonly kindled by unexpected sparks.

A loving friend's rebuke sinks into the heart, and convinces the judgment; an enemy's or stranger's rebuke is invective, and irritates, not converts.

He is rich who receives more than he spends; he, on the contrary, is poor, who spends more than he receives.

We should be cautious how to indulge in the feelings of a virtuous indignation. It is the handsome brother of anger and hatred.

They who are the most weary of life, and yet the most unwilling to die, are such who have lived to no purpose, who have rather breathed than lived.

Wit is brushwood: Judgment is timber. The first makes the brightest flame; but the other gives the most lasting heat.

Men will not die an hour sooner, but abundantly the better, by timely setting their heart and house in order.

To be Free-minded and cheerfully disposed at hours of meat and of sleep, is one of the best precepts for long life.

Controversy may indeed interrupt some friendships—superficial friendships; reserve scarcely permits their existence.

Providence.—God draweth straight lines, but we think and call them crooked.

Despair.—Consider what God can do, and you will never despair of success.

Divine Mercy.—The depths of misery are never beyond the depths of mercy.

Humility.—Look on the good in others, and the evil in thyself; make that the parallel, most men do just the contrary, and that foolish and unjust comparison puffs them up.

So necessary is fun to the mind, that a late philosopher says, if you should build school-houses without play-grounds, nobody would get beyond short division in a life time.

A land of liberty, a land of newspapers. "I had rather have newspapers without government," said Jefferson, "than government without newspapers."

"Why did you not pocket some of these pears?" said one boy to another; "nobody was there to see."—"Yes there was—I was there to see myself, and I don't ever intend to see myself do a mean thing!"

It may possibly sound old-fogysh, but it is nevertheless true, that the world might dispense, for some years, with new ideas, if we could only thoroughly disseminate the true ones which we have already in existence.

Imparting pleasure is like putting money at interest; it benefits both lender and borrower at once. And no one can be long and truly happy unless others sympathise in and share that happiness. The purest friendship is the most unselfish in its nature. It will labour—ay, suffer alone and uncomplainingly—to procure the happiness of the beloved one; and "verily it hath its reward."

PORTRAITS OF CHRIST.

It has always been the highest point of the art of painting and sculpture among Christian nations, and men of the highest genius are ever labouring to embody their conceptions of the sublime perfection of his Godlike nature. Yet all fail. The subject is too high, too great. And in the most successful of these representations it is not every spectator that has eyes to see or a heart to feel the moral beauty that was aimed at in the harmonious expression of the different virtues of his character.

Yet these imperfect representations of him, whom, not having seen in person, yet we are bound to love, must be interesting to the Christian. We all would give much to know the exact looks of the Saviour. But they are probably lost to the world. We must ask imagination to supply the loss as vividly as genius inspired by piety can. It is true we have accounts of pictures of Jesus Christ taken during his life, but these we must be credulous indeed not to put down as fictions. Legends exist of a portrait which he sent himself to King Abgarus, of Edessa. This according to the tradition was miraculously impressed on a napkin which Jesus placed upon his face. Such a miracle would be far from according in its spirit with those of the New Testament, and suffices therefore to throw suspicion on the legend. The handkerchief of St. Veronica is said to have also borne a portrait of our Master impressed in a similar way. The holy woman offered him her handkerchief to wipe the sweat from his brow, as he toiled under the cross on his way to Calvary. But the very name attributed to her sounds mythic; and Catholics themselves acknowledge that it is composed of the words *vera icon, true image*, that is of Christ. However the handkerchief is still exhibited every Easter in St. Peter's church in Rome, but from so high and dark a balcony that we had to take it on faith that it presented any face at all.

A picture of Christ painted by the Evangelist Luke is mentioned by the old writers. And in a spurious letter addressed to the Roman Senate and ascribed to Lentulus, predecessor of Pontius Pilate as Governor of Judea, is a description of Christ's appearance. He is described there as of a handsome, manly stature and countenance. The most ancient of the existing representations of him is sculptured in *bas relief* on a sarcophagus of the second or third century which is now at the Vatican at Rome. He is there exhibited as a young man without beard, with Roman features, flowing and slightly curled hair, wearing a Roman toga, the dress of a Roman citizen, and seated on a curule chair, such a chair as the chief magistrates of Rome were carried about in, in triumphal procession. In the same Vatican there is another representation of him, made in the fourth century, which has an oval face, oriental features, parted hair, and a short straight beard. There are some sublime and beautiful statues of him. The best of the present age are that of Thorwalsden, in Copenhagen, and that of Daneker, in St. Petersburg. The most famous extant is of course that by Michael Angelo in the church of the Jesuits in Rome.

But all these are only aids to the fancy. We cannot see our Master's face and form. We cannot know his real looks. We may and should and will imagine in them every lovely and winning feature and grace we observe in the good around us, if this warms our interest in meditating on him, but still he is one, as the apostle Peter writes, significantly and suggestively "whom not having seen we love."

'TIS A GOOD WORLD WE HAVE.

BY FREDERICK WRIGHT.

"And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good."

Oh! yes! Oh! yes! this world is good
And beautiful and fair,
Ten thousand times ten thousand joys
Are scattered every where.
The sun that glads the busy day,
The moon and stars by night,
What glorious ministers are they
Of ever new delight!

The balmy air that fans the brow,
And rocks the warbler's nest,
How thrillingly, yet soft and low,
It utters Love's behest!
Fresh from the hand of nature's God
Why myriad splendours shine
O'er mount, and vale, o'er rock, and sod,
And these, O! man, are thine!

Yes! beautiful is this fair world!
And wondrous too, and grand,
The azure canopy unfurled
O'er smiling sea and land.
Yon snow-white cloud whose garniture
Of gold and violet—
Make its pure lustre shine more pure,
'Tis Heaven's own carcanet!

The drowsy solitude that sleeps
Upon the misty lea—
As her fond tryst the evening keeps
Beneath the holly tree.
The oak, grave monarch of the wood,
The osier's pensile spray,
The murmur of the dreamy flood,
How sweet, how blest are they!

And gloriously the anthem swells
Up thro' the Heaven's blue dome,
Where man in close communion dwells
In his vast city home!
Great God! 'tis wondrous, 'tis sublime,
This world so great and grand;
The summer's bloom, the winter's rime,
Are pictures from thy hand!

'Tis a brave world we have indeed!
And good, as well as brave!
Where fountains flow for every need
That human want can crave:
Mercy below! Mercy above!
Mercy around we see!
Fed with the stream of Endless Love,
Could earth more glorious be!

THE CHURCH'S PRAYER.

(FROM THE "INQUIRER.")

"*To the Father through the Son*,"
Did the ancient ritual run;
So the Christian prayer was said,
So the Christian vow was paid.
Was the suppliant bending low,
Where the Nile's broad waters flow?
Joined he in the choral praise,
Which the Seven Churches raise?
Worshipped he in gloom and fear,
Roman soldiers ling'ring near?
Still that holy prayer was one,
"*To the Father through the Son*."

Years have come, and years have gone,
And the Church no more is one;
Broken now the bonds of love;
Flown the peace-bestowing Dove:
Broken now Christ's cup divine,
Spilled the Sacramental wine.
Other prayers to Heaven arise,
Swell the new-made Litanies,
Single homage no more given
To the Father-God of Heaven.—
Only, hoping, watching still,
Lonely light on lonely hill,
Scattered churches here and there,
Echo the old Church's prayer,
Pray as when the Church was one,
"*To the Father through the Son*."

Years will come, when years have past,
When God's truth grows clear at last;
When the broken links again
Clasp in one unbroken chain;
When to all one Grace is poured,
From the chalice of the Lord;
When from vast cathedral pile,
When from far off coral isle,
From the ladder angels tread,
From the dying infant's bed,
Rises one united prayer,
Ringing through the ringing air,
And that prayer—the same—the one,
"*To the Father through the Son*."

☞ LOST PARCELS.

As several parcels of the CHRISTIAN FREEMAN have been lost: the Postmaster requests that the Office from which they should have been delivered be applied to first; should they not be there, the Editor then to be written to immediately. We hope our friends who may not receive their parcels by the Seventh of the month will apply to their office, failing there, then write to us at once, and we will forward another and look after the lost one.

Edited by ROBERT SPEARS, SUNDERLAND.